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RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO IMMEDIATE 8459  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 002876

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR CH JA  
SUBJECT: XI JINPING MEETS HATOYAMA

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Classified By: DCM James P. Zumwalt per 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary: PRC Vice President Xi Jinping had a "good and productive meeting" with PM Hatoyama December 14, and Xi strongly endorsed China's policy of attaching importance to Sino-Japan ties, MOFA Asia DG Akitaka Saiki told the DCM December 15. PM Hatoyama told Xi that the linchpin of Japan's foreign policy is its relationship with the United States, and upon this foundation Japan will develop good relations with China and other neighbors. "Relations among and between the U.S., Japan and China should be plus-sum, not zero-sum," Hatoyama said. Without going into detail, Xi offered his support for Japan's view of the East Asian Community. Hatoyama raised (and got no response to) East China Sea economic development and PRC military transparency. Hatoyama also called for bilateral cooperation to make COP 15 succeed. Food safety and the government procurement issues did not come up. Xi also had a good meeting with the Emperor, although the process of setting it up has caused some political blowback for Hatoyama's government, Saiki said. End Summary.

PM Meeting

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¶2. (C) PRC Vice President Xi Jinping had a "good and productive meeting" with Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama December 14, and the two covered many subjects during their nearly hour-long conversation, MOFA Asia DG Akitaka Saiki told Embassy Tokyo DCM December 15. Saiki, who participated in the meeting, said that he sensed that Xi would continue the PRC's policy of attaching importance to China-Japan ties, including their "strategic and mutually beneficial relationship." The PM explained to Xi that the "core" and "linchpin" of Japan's foreign policy is its relationship with the United States. "With this as a cornerstone," Japan seeks to develop good relations with China and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Hatoyama told Xi. Relations among and between the United States, Japan and China should be "plus-sum" as opposed to "zero-sum," Hatoyama added. Xi "nodded in response," Saiki said.

¶3. (C) Xi said that China attaches great importance to Sino-Japan ties, and this relationship is an "important part" of China's overall foreign policy, Saiki reported. On the subject of Hatoyama's proposed East Asian Community, Xi offered his endorsement, but did not go into details. Hatoyama also raised the subject of East China Sea economic development and called on China to show greater transparency in its military expenditures, but Xi did not respond to

either. (Note: On the subject of the East China Sea, Saiki said that he met separately with Vice Minister Wu Dawei and complained about the lack of progress on this matter in spite of four director-level meetings. "Unless there is progress, it will be hard to persuade opposition politicians and other conservatives who are insisting on Japan's rights in the East China Sea," Saiki told Wu. Wu responded that he understood the importance of progress, and after some consideration, accepted Saiki's proposal to have DG-level discussions in Beijing towards the end of December. Saiki said he would "disguise" these discussions as Six-Party-related consultations, Saiki added. End Note.)

¶14. (C) Saiki said that PM Hatoyama did not raise the subject of food safety because it appears that the Chinese Government is quietly making progress on this matter and perhaps soon will be ready to establish a food safety dialogue mechanism with Japan akin to what it has with the United States. The issue of the Chinese Government procurement also did not come up, Saiki said. Hatoyama also called for bilateral cooperation to make COP 15 succeed.

Emperor Meeting

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¶15. (C) Xi had a good meeting with the Emperor as well, Saiki continued. In fact, prior to the meeting, Xi had shown great interest in the proper protocol procedures for greeting the Emperor, including whether or not he should bow and what part of his meeting with the Emperor would be photographed. Xi bowed "very deeply" -- off camera -- before walking towards the Emperor, at which point he shook hands -- on camera. "Xi seemed to know how to please the Japanese side while taking into consideration his own concerns about being photographed

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while bowing," Saiki said.

¶16. (C) The Chinese Embassy made a late request for a Xi meeting with the Emperor (November 22), to which the Imperial Household Agency (IHA) responded that requests of less than one month's lead time cannot be accommodated. PRC Ambassador Cui Tiankai's entreaties to FM Okada were to no avail, and even the Prime Minister agreed that the IHA's prerogatives needed to be heeded. To compensate for this lack of an audience with the Emperor, MOFA added a number of protocol bells and whistles to the visit, including displaying the PRC's flags around town and arranging a PM-hosted banquet for 80 people (events normally reserved for official visits of heads of state and government). At the 11th hour, ruling DPJ Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa stepped in and "arranged" for the IHA to break its own rule and accept a meeting with Xi, Saiki explained. (Note: Ozawa, himself leading a major delegation to the PRC at the same time Xi was to be in Japan, was likely trying to improve the atmospherics of own visit, rather than seeking to garner favor with Xi. End Note.)

¶17. (C) Once the meeting with the Emperor was arranged, it was too late to turn off the flags and other protocol accoutrements, and MOFA has been placed in a tough spot trying to explain to the opposition LDP and others why Xi received such generous treatment, Saiki said. (Note: For his part, Ozawa has been roundly criticized in the press for his "political use" of the Emperor, and his public quarrel with the head of the IHA has generated negative publicity for himself and the Hatoyama government. End Note.)

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